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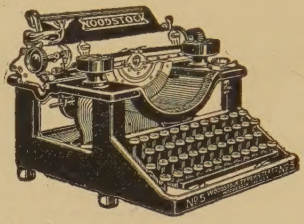
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Yale Divinity Quarterly

Vol. XV MAY, 1918 No. 1

THE MINISTRY OF THOUGHT.

Roland Bainton, B. D.

By the "Ministry of Thought" the writer does not mean every useful function of thinking, but rather the ministry of thought in the ministry to men. Neither has he in mind every kind of thought, but rather that which bears on the ultimate problems of theology and the allied problems of philosophy, history and science.

There has been an aversion to such thinking on the part of Christian ministers in all ages. Paul was determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified. Timothy was advised to beware of philosophy and vain deceit. Tertullian would have nothing to do with philosophy, but believed in Christianity because it was absurd. Ritschl and his followers felt that truth should not be sought outside of history. We ourselves wonder whether in school we should take the more technical courses, and whether in the pastorate we should not spend more time in the parish than in the study. This aversion found a very strong expression in the words of one of our colored brethren, who was asked to pray by a fellow minister, who had been boasting of his ignorance. The good man began, "We thank Thee, O Lord, that our brother is ignorant. Make him ignoranter than a mule. And in the land which Thou hast given him may his 'ears be long". But perhaps the extreme form of this reluctance to think is found in the present day, when some preachers are saying, "Down with thought! On with the war!"

There are many reasons for this aversion. All have their root in the fundamental purpose of the minister. The spirit of the Lord is upon him to preach good tidings to the poor. His task is not to make men wise, but to make them good. That purpose underlies all of the reasons.

The first is that men may be good without very much thinking. The writer had that brought home to him very forcibly when he was a lad. He had just figured out what he supposed to be a brand new theory of the Trinity and chose his sister, two years younger than himself, as the person privileged to hear it for the first time. She did not seem to be very much interested, so he asked rather testily, "Don't you ever think about these things?"

"Well, I will confess I don't", she said. "Do you have to, to be good?"

You don't have to, to be good. Men say, therefore, "Why bother with it at all?"

And men can not only be good, but can do good without much thinking. Moody, Spurgeon and Gipsy Smith accepted the simple gospel, as it is called, without any questions, but were nevertheless men of great influence for righteousness.

On the other hand the man who thinks may not be so good. If he devotes his time to the solution of ultimate problems he must be indifferent to the immediate needs of men. For example the research chemist spends his life in looking for truths which will be of ultimate value, but in the meantime does nothing to relieve existing suffering. The doctor on the other hand does the best he can with what knowledge he has. The preacher corresponds to the doctor and cannot bury himself in thought to the neglect of immediate needs.

But the thinker may be not only indifferent to men's immediate needs, but by reason of that fact indifferent also to morality itself. The early defenders of Christianity were fond of pointing out that the philosophers were not always the best of men. Some betrayed their friends. Some were rebels. Many were guilty of the gross sins of the flesh. We have an illustration of the same sort of thing in our own day. All the thinking of the German theological professors has not saved them from becoming the fawning sycophants of the Imperial Government.

Another reason is that much thinking inevitably increases the difficulty of the minister's task. After all men are not converted to enthusiasm by ideas, but rather to ideas by enthusiasm. The man who is wise but cool will not accomplish so much as the enthusiastic fool. The preacher must be burning in spirit. But

thinking is likely to dampen his ardor. It is easy enough to be enthusiastic when the world is divided by sharp lines into rights and wrongs, blacks and whites. But the more a man thinks, the more his whites and blacks become greys and all enthusiasm evaporates in an endeavor to determine which side is that of the angels. Many men say, therefore, "Let us keep our ignorance to preserve our ardor".

Thinking creates the further difficulty of removing the preacher from his congregation. The more he has thought the harder it becomes for him to communicate his ideas to others. The great are always misunderstood. Many men, therefore, prefer to know less and be easily intelligible. They would rather be mules with a comprehensible bray, than horses among mules under the necessity of translating neighs into brays.

Those who do not think may be good and those who think may be bad, and in any case thinking increases the difficulty of the minister's task.

What shall we say to this? We must admit that the essence of religion does not consist in thinking. We must also admit that the preacher corresponds to the doctor rather than to the research chemist. He cannot hope to be a scholar. But the minister ought not, therefore, to shun hard thinking as something to be feared, but ought rather to do as much as he can in so much time as he has.

But why? What is the ministry of thought? It is to be a snow-shovel. Thinking is not the main train in religion. It is the forerunner which prepares the way.

To begin with, thinking is a snow-shovel for the minister himself. Intellectual thoroughness will remove prejudices, create respect, and gain a hearing which would be otherwise impossible. There is a class of people who will not listen to the preacher at all, if he cannot convince them that he is a careful thinker. They are a sophisticated lot, the height of whose ambition is to publish something whether it will do anybody any good or not. Their general view of the world is that it runs like a clock, which nobody made and nobody wound up. God and the life to come are the superstitions of those who trust more to their hearts than to their heads. The Christians of the last two thousand years have been simply a deluded lot and as for ministers, they are as soft

in their heads as in their hearts. Needless to say a man cannot gain a hearing with such folk, unless he can convince them that he is their intellectual equal.

But fortunately these men do not constitute the entire human race. We may have few of them in our congregations. But intellectual thoroughness is just as useful a snow-shovel in preparing the way with ordinary people. The commonest folk respect the man of parts. The ignorant look up to the thorough thinker as a man of authority. His words have weight. People soon forsake the glib preacher to seek out the man whose words are solid. Thought is a snow-shovel for the minister himself.

Thought is also a shovel for his message. It clears the way not only in the delivery, but also in the discovery of what he has to say. Religion is not a problem, but a life, but nevertheless there are many problems which must be solved before we can perfectly live the religious life.

How do we know that God is good? After these thousands of years His creatures still hate one another. The veneer of civilization rubs off and the beast is revealed. Not nature but men are red in tooth and claw. What is he like who made us? Why does He not reveal Himself? "O that I knew where I might find Him, that I might even come before His presence!"

Is there a life to come? When the disease of the body destroys all our higher functions, will the destruction of the body restore them? If a slight blow on the head will make a man an idiot, will a heavier blow make him an angel?

The problems are not insoluble. The writer believes with all his heart in God and in the life to come. But there are problems.

And if the way must be cleared for religion, even more is this true in the case of morality. The war is the simplest illustration. The pacifist must feel some uncertainty about the morality of a position which requires that he should not only sacrifice himself, but refuse certain forms of protection to other people. He must also question the wisdom of his stand, since the most that he is likely to accomplish is not to stop the war, but to produce defeat, with the consequent loss at once of the political advantages of successful resistance and the moral advantages of non-resistance.

But on the other hand he who believes in war must feel grave concern about the ethic of a form of the cross which consists in trying to crucify the other fellow first. It is one thing to die to make men holy, and quite another to kill to make men holy. He must also doubt the wisdom of a method of dealing with sin which has so long been unable to eradicate selfishness and regenerate the human heart.

The problem is not insoluble. There is no ethical snow-drift through which we cannot plough. But the task is extremely difficult. He who cries "Down with thought! On with the war!"is likely to lose himself in a storm of folly and sin. Thought must pave the way for action. Thinking is the snow-shovel for the minister and for his message.

That will be increasingly true in the future. Men are questioning the truths of religion and will question them in the next generation as they have not in the past. The foundations are shaken. The sun is turned to darkness and the moon to blood. Upon us rests the solemn but glorious task of leading men to the light of the knowledge of God.

A PERSONAL WORLD.

For some time, The Yale Divinity Quarterly has been reaching me addressed "Rev. ————." Perhaps this had imperceptibly prepared me for the shock of being asked to "write an article" for said periodical. But the realization of the enormity of the proposition has been growing upon me every minute since. (Fortunately not many minutes were allowed me!)

More or less inured though I am to the state of reverendship, I yet find myself incapable of hiding behind a divinity-editorial "we." It is safer to come out plumply and confess myself the "settled lookin' lady" to whom everybody connected with Edwards and Taylor and Dwight Hall has been so courteous and considerate that she feels a sort of proprietary right in Trowbridge Library, and a grandmotherly interest in every member of all the classes. But of course, if you will call me reverend and ask me to write in Divinity Quarterlies, I shall preach! Settled looking

ladies are bound to have views of their own; and one of mine has been that it should be compulsory for every professional preacher to "sit under" some one else's preaching at regular and frequent intervals. It is a pleasure to be for the nonce that some one else and usurp your prerogatives.

As I try to sum up in these last days before we part, the wishes that association with you in library, class and chapel has made very warm and real, the ideal comes embodied in a memory. I see my father, silver-haired at sixty-six, yet thrilling with boyish enthusiasm for every phase of life and experience, his own or others'. I see him, as I saw him his last night but one on earth, standing for very exuberance of pleasure at the beauty of a Venetian sunset; a pleasure so contagious that everybody on the trolley-car from Padua to Venice shared it with him as he pointed to the pictures framed now in this little window, now in that, against the glowing background—a group of children fishing—sun-browned laborers returning home—the sauntering tow-path donkey—the ducks in the glorified pools—or the ever-changing arrangements of cloud-shapes and colors in sky and sea. And I know that what I wish for each of you as you go out into "the wide, wide world," is just such an indomitable zest for life, that shall make you able to meet and shoulder your own and other people's shares in the world's hardest ordeals, as he had done, and still be lads to the last! I am wishing it especially for you whose work is to be ministering. You must have this contagion of life in order to be able to meet successfully every sort and size of human need. And as I have thought of the spiritual achievement of such unconquerable youth, it has seemed to me its fundamental element was *keeping interested in as many things as possible*. Back of that, and leading to it lies the imagination to put oneself in another's place and be interested in his interests; and the sense of humor and proportion which keeps one's own shadow from looming too large.

These things can be cultivated, and students of Yale School of Religion have the opportunity of an environment which I have sometimes felt is not used to the utmost. Sprague Hall is very near. Do you all know it and what it stands for? I am inclined to believe that no minister is safe, for himself or for his people,

who does not know and love music. Do you appreciate pictures? If not, all the more reason for your spending deliberate hours in the Yale Art Gallery until something of what others see in them dawns upon you and enlarges your soul with one more sympathy. Do you know even the University Library? Trowbridge is ours, and we love it; but we do not love it wisely if we rest satisfied within its horizons and do not often lift up our minds to other realms of thought and achievement. Are you taking any courses outside the School of Religion? Do, if possible, at least one a year, if only to bring you up against another set of men and ideas, and remind you that a University is bigger than a technical school. Do you *play* enough? I have sometimes feared not. Do you live out of doors as much as possible? There is a remoteness from life about mere books, especially theological books, that only sunshine and fresh air and as much contact as possible with *people* can transmute into living power available for ministering. Do you read poetry? If you don't love it naturally, set out to live with it till you learn to. In a word, never be content to say of any field of human interest: "I have no taste for that." Let your profoundest consciousness be, "I am not only a man, but a minister to men, and nothing human shall be foreign to me." He who has thus deliberately and of set purpose kept his windows open to "*a'* the airts the wind can blow," will always be interested, and by consequence, interesting. He will have the secret of youth, which is the secret of usefulness.

I am aware that this sounds like a counsel of perfection in the midst of examination week, and in a world *so busy*. Yet the news from the front only re-inforces my conviction that the man who is best able to help himself and his comrades through stress and strain is the one who has resources beyond the day's work and the moment's surroundings, and like the "Soldier of France," can see the sunset and the spring-time's fairness while he goes about life's grimmest business.

Alpha W. Barlow.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE SCHOOL.

The academic year 1917-18 closed in the School of Religion with the anniversary exercises on June 2 and 3. Twenty-seven men had presented theses for the degree this year, the ninety-sixth since the School was founded. Eight of the men came from homes outside the United States, and the rest represented various parts of an area extending to Idaho on the west and to Texas on the south. Of the men who were members of the class last year, ten are in government service.

The exercises began with a service in Marquand Chapel on Sunday afternoon, June 2, when Professor Winchester preached the anniversary sermon to the Senior class. Dean Brown conducted the service, which was attended by the class and by members of the faculty in academic robes. After an opening prayer by Professor Beach, Professor Winchester delivered the sermon, from the text: "We preach Christ crucified, . . the power of God and the wisdom of God." He urged upon the members of the graduating class the need for unity of effort and clear, strong emphasis upon religious fundamentals, making room in the church for both sentimentalists and rationalists but permitting neither to overcloud the essential message of Christianity—the life of the crucified Christ. At the close of the sermon, a Communion service ended the exercises for the afternoon.

On Monday forenoon, June 3, the graduating exercises took place in the chapel at 11 o'clock. President Hadley acted as chairman. Dean Brown offered the invocation, and a series of short addresses by members of the Senior class followed. C. B. Loomis first described briefly "The Dramatic Method in Religious Education"; John Moore followed him with an address on "The Church and the New Age"; P. E. O. Shaw discussed "The Place of the Seer in the World of Today"; and R. L. Calhoun spoke last on "The Conquest of Evil." The address to the graduating class was delivered by Prof. H. B. Wright, who came to the exercises from his work in Camp Devens. His purpose was to suggest to the out-going graduates the task which they would confront "not so much in the role of ministers of the gospel as in

the role of citizens of the kingdom of this world." With a number of incidents from his recent experiences in the cantonment work to serve as illustrations, he explained the conditions which have combined to make religious work in the camps strikingly successful. The opportunity offered by the circumstances of military life, and the vast burden which the church will need to carry after the war present a double challenge to ministers everywhere. It is necessary that each man who is going into the work of the church determine to give all his ability to the task of meeting it successfully.

The alumni luncheon was served at 1 o'clock in Center Church house to the graduates of Yale and of other seminaries. For the program of informal speeches which followed, Rev. W. G. Lathrop, '92, acted as toastmaster. He called first upon Rev. G. L. Paine, who is waiting to sail for work in France, and upon Dr. Prigmore, '94, who has just returned. Dr. Williamson, who is filling the pulpit of Dr. Petty during his period of service in Europe, was the next speaker, and then followed Rev. R. E. Brown, '03, of Waterbury, who has been in France on leave for several months, and Rev. Robert Bell, '08, vicar of St. Paul's church of New Haven. Fred Smith, '18, spoke next to represent the graduating class, and Professor Walker spoke for the faculty. His announcement of a volume of essays on the war to be issued by the faculty this summer was greeted with enthusiasm. The chairman called for two verses of "America" to close the session, and the guests dispersed, to attend an informal reception by "the ladies of the faculty" in the quadrangle. Except for the University Commencement on June 19, the work of the School was ended for the year.

THE NEW SOCIALISM.

"Socialism is finished," said a Christian minister the other day in one of our metropolitan cities. Social idealism as represented by the workers of the world, he pointed out, had a sense of brotherhood, but did nothing effective to further the cause of peace.

Socialists in Europe showed themselves to be nationalistic patriots before anything else, and in seeming violation of all their pacifist protestation went joyously flocking to the colors of their several fatherlands.

Truly, the Socialism of 1914 and 1915 has been found wanting, just as the brand of Christianity then in vogue and still lingering with a great many has failed. Out of the world debris a new, saner and more spiritual Socialism has arisen. The new Socialists will no longer be a violently partisan body of comparatively small size, and they may not be known by their present name. There is going to be no room for partisanship in the old sense of the word in the coming epoch. Co-operation will be the guiding principle of social regulation. The Allies are winning this war through co-operation; the Central Powers are enabled to hold out as long as they do through co-operation.

Co-operation in the democratic countries will mean a stronger and more vital centralized power. The United States government has taken over the railroads and the shipping; the coal mines and vital industries are in line unless private corporations will do better in the future than they have done in the past. Justice for all, and not pity, will be the moral keynote of the new epoch. The sword in the hands of greedy nations shall no longer be lifted to exploit less fortunate peoples. The government will see to it through a national board that pride, greed and prejudice shall no longer occasion injustice and dissatisfaction in the industrial world.

The world is catching up with these ideas through the painful experience of war. Men have learned the lesson of human interdependence, and they will be loath to return to the pre-war conditions of industrial competition, waste and the exploitation of weaker classes. The minister of good-will has an important part in the program of the New Socialism. The people can read and write, but they have few or no progressive ideas. They are looking forward to a new order, but they cannot see in which direction it lies. Conservatism is so prone to "camouflage" itself with the new in order to create listless indifference. The ministry of today is called to clarify the new order and strip off the "camouflage" under which the old order protects itself. Shall

it be said in 1930 that the Christian ministry in 1919 was not with the engineer in the cab but in the caboose content with howling of the "awful calamity," while the claims of God and the needs of men were waiting for its help? The loyalty of the Christian minister to his country demands not only that he should give his moral support to the various war activities, but herald the implications of President Wilson's messages for the day of reconstruction.

Harrison Dubbs.

BOOK REVIEW.

Studies in the Book of Daniel. A Discussion of the Historical Questions. By Robert Dick Wilson, D. D., Princeton Theological Seminary. Putnam, 1917, pp. 402. $3.50.

This is the first of three volumes in which the accepted view as to the date and character of the Book of Daniel is to be reported. In this volume the historical statements in Daniel are defended, and objections answered. The second volume is to treat the philological arguments against its early date. The third will discuss its relation to the canon and its character as an apocalypse. The reasons why Daniel is commonly put at about 166 B. C. (Prof. Torrey has advanced good reasons for dating chapters 1-6 somewhat earlier, 245-225 B. C.) are many and cumulative. Chief among them is the fact that the history of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Greek Kingdoms is given so fully and accurately as far as the desecration of the temple by Antiochus IV, in December, 168 B. C.; whereas the restoration of the temple by Judas (Dec. 165 B. C.) is not known, and the death of Antiochus soon after is foretold but not in accordance with the facts. In contrast to the fulness and correctness of the history of the Greek period are the various mistakes as to the end of the Babylonian and the Persian periods which Professor Wilson has to explain away. The matter is quite simple, though it is here made to seem highly complex because of the abundance of learned material—not all relevant—which is accumulated about it, and especially because of

the confusion between evidence and conjecture, between known facts and mere possibilities, which characterizes the author's method. The main facts are that Daniel supposes that Belshazzar is Nebuchadnezzar's son and successor, reigning at least three years, and the last king of the Babylonian empire; that Babylon is taken by Darius the Mede, and Belshazzar put to death; and that after a brief Median kingdom follows Cyrus and the Persian world empire. But in fact Belshazzar was the son of Nabunaid, who was not of Nebuchadnezzar's line; and he was not, so far as is known, called King of Babylon. Cyrus was the conqueror of Babylon, through his general, Gobryas; and there was no Median world kingdom between the Babylonian and the Persian. It is perhaps owing to the fact that Darius I (Hystaspes) had to reconquer Babylon in 520 B. C. that he was confused with its first Persian conqueror. Jewish tradition in the Greek period uniformly put Darius before Cyrus, and yet kept the fact that Cyrus was the first Persian King of Babylon by making Darius a Mede.

Prof. Wilson has then chiefly to prove that Belshazzar could rightly be called King of Babylon while his father Nabunaid was still reigning, and could be called son of Nebuchadnezzar. The first is done by showing how loosely the word "king" was used, and the second by supposing various possibilities of combination between seven uses of the word "father" and eleven uses of the word "son," according to which a man could be the son of half a dozen fathers, and Belshazzar could have been son of both Nebuchadnezzar and Nabunaid in half a dozen different ways. It is also necessary to prove the historicity of Darius the Mede and his kingdom. It requires seven chapters to remove this simple case of historical confusion. In the end it appears that Cyrus's general Gobryas, who took Babylon—Cyrus entered the city three months later—may have had Darius as his other name, and may have been a Mede, and may have had a Xerxes as his father, and may have been a sub-king under Cyrus. Other historical difficulties are dealt with in like ways.

There is scholarship here in abundance, but the book is not scholarly; it is a polemical writing, in its tone and character throughout, its aim being to "confirm the faith of any wavering ones in the historicity of a book which was so highly prized and

so often quoted by our Lord and his apostles." No doubt historical students are sometimes too sure of their results and too ready to "set limits to the possible." But after all when, as in the Book of Daniel, simple statements can be confronted by simple facts, and simple explanations of discrepancies present themselves, it is not natural nor reasonable to put these aside on the ground that words can have other than their natural meanings, and that there are so many things that we do not know that our best way is to set no limits to the possible—no limits except the inerrancy of Scripture. One tries to read such a book as this with an open mind, but it is hard to judge mildly a book which itself judges harshly. The assumption of the book is that nothing in Daniel is to be rejected unless it can be proved false, and that nothing can be proved false because our knowledge is never sufficient to exclude the possibility that it is true. We cannot prove that Nebuchadnezzar did not besiege Jerusalem in the third year of Jehoiakim (Dan. 1:1); we cannot prove that "Chaldeans" could not have meant "wise men" in 600 B. C. We cannot prove that the decrees which Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar and Darius are said to have issued were not actually made by these kings. To deny them would involve a knowledge of all the decrees that these kings made. "Such a knowledge will never be ours." "It has not been shown, it cannot be shown, that what Daniel says is not true." Nothing is impossible, nothing improbable, except what departs in any respect from that which is written in the book.

Prof. Wilson's book has, then, a great deal of historical material in it; but I do not remember any other book of history which is more simply and frankly a book of dogma.

Frank C. Porter.

Yale Divinity Quarterly

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VACATION LOYALTY.

The average soldier appears at his worst when on leave. Even the brief periods of rest in billets behind the front line trenches bring violent reactions from the strain of trench life, reactions which are natural enough but none the less deplorable. More harmful still are the longer furloughs which take the men temporarily away from the army, with its stringent discipline, and away from the feverish activity which leaves no time for laxness. The chaplain who has the well-being of his men at heart dreads the effect of a furlough. It is not because rest and recreation are bad things; it is because too many soldiers make bad use of them. They make their unaccustomed liberty an occasion for the flesh, and suffer their loyalty to lapse during vacation time.

The average student faces every year the problem of fighting a tendency of just this sort. After the exacting tasks of the school year are finished, there is a powerfully human impulse to loosen one's grip and "let things

slide" until another academic year is begun. Some men yield to the impulse, and their vacation record consists of a lot of jobs carelessly done—not idleness of hands, which would often be far preferable, but idleness of wills and of consciences which wink at slip-shod work because it is vacation time. Other men resist the impulse, with dogged determination to keep busy, recess or no recess. Such men struggle through the summer, driving themselves to exhausting efforts which get things done, indeed, but which burn up much energy in friction and leave the men lax, like uncoiled springs, to begin work in the fall. Both these courses are fundamentally wrong because both mistake the purpose of a recess.

When the soldier on furlough "lets down," he forgets that the furlough is not a period isolated from his regular service but is instead an essential part of it; the rest time is intended to make him better fit to carry through his task as a soldier, and when he uses it to break down rather than to build up his strength, he is defeating its purpose—he is being disloyal to his cause. When the student in vacation takes any course which lowers his efficiency, whether through over-indulgence or over-exertion, he too is being disloyal. He must keep clear before his mind the cause which he has chosen for his own, and use his furlough to make himself fit for service. He must see to it that there is enough of rest and of play-time to permit tired cells to rebound into health and vigor, and enough of work *well done* to keep muscles and mind in trim. The central fact is neither the play nor the work, but the cause to which both are subordinate. This year less than ever can there be tolerance for vacation disloyalty.

SCHOOL NOTES.

The month of April was clouded for the School of Religion by the loss suffered by one of its members. Mrs. Henry D. Holt, wife of an esteemed member of the class of 1918, was taken ill with pneumonia April 6th. She was removed at once to Grace Hospital where she died April 15th. Mr. Holt took the body to his home city, Norfolk, Va., for interment. Mrs. Holt is survived by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Parker of Shanghai, China, two sisters, Mrs. J. I. Hamaker and Miss Gladys Parker, of Lynchburg, Va., and one brother, Alvin Parker, who is training at Camp Alliston, Alabama. Mr. and Mrs. Holt had planned to devote their lives to missionary work in China in the field of education. They had already taught there for a year and had returned to America for a more adequate preparation for the task.

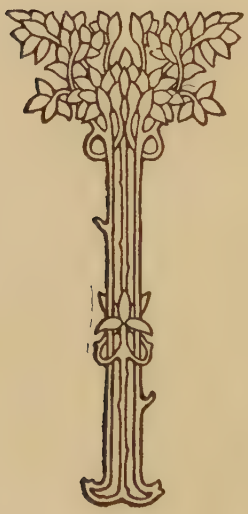
Dean Brown was called by the National Committee on the Moral Aims of the War to lecture in various cities of the middle west. After rendering two weeks of invaluable service, he returned for Commencement.

Dryden L. Phelps, '10, left the school early in May for a chaplaincy in the National Army.

ALUMNI NOTES.

Archdeacon Barrett P. Tyler, '06, has been given three months' leave of absence by the Church of the Redeemer, Morristown, N. J., to work in co-operation with the Y. M. C. A. at Camp Merritt. He is sent by Bishops Lines and Stearly and represents the Diocese of Newark.

Through an oversight of the editors, mention of the wedding of Mr. Hugh Shields, '19, was not made. He was married June 6, 1917, to Miss Alberta Reed, at Indianapolis, Ind. They are living in Bridgeport, where he is pastor of the Stratfield Baptist Church. Both are graduates of Butler College.



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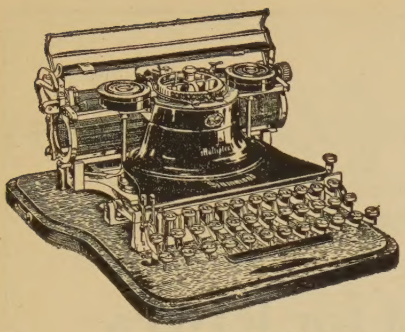
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